

Syllabus

COMM 6806: Contemporary Theories of Communication Autumn 2022

Professor: Dr. Teresa Lynch
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Office: 3058 Derby Hall
Office Hours: Mondays 9:30am – 10:30am via Zoom and by appointment (in person or via Zoom)

CLASS MEETING

Mondays and Wednesdays 2:20pm – 3:40pm in Derby Hall 3116

REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

I will provide all required materials and readings via Carmen throughout the semester.

Recommended materials:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association 2020: the official guide to APA style* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

This course is an introduction to contemporary communication theories and the process of theory building using social scientific perspectives. Following completion of this course, students should have developed skills and knowledge enabling them to:

- Distinguish between social scientific and other ways of knowing.
- Explain many of the theories used in the social scientific study of communication.
- Develop an understanding of the research conducted by faculty members in the School of Communication at OSU.
- Explain the theories that are important to their interests as a scholar.
- Analyze and constructively critique the theories discussed in class or found in the readings.
- Identify linkages between the theories found in distinct areas of the discipline and utilize these theories to improve their own research.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are a variety of assignments in this course. I will provide additional details and instructions about each assignment in Carmen ahead of deadlines.

Discussion Questions and Participation: The success of seminar-style courses largely revolves around the quality of discussion that takes place. In this course, discussion will primarily concern topics related to the required reading. If you carefully and thoughtfully read the material, you will naturally be prepared to discuss it in class. To facilitate discussion, you are also responsible for posting one detailed question about the reading(s) prior to every class. You must post your question to the discussion forum in Carmen by 9am on the date readings are scheduled.

Since the idea is to generate multiple points for discussion, you cannot post a question someone has already asked. Therefore, you need to pay attention to the questions your classmates have already posted. You can, however, build from your classmates' questions to create a cohesive line of inquiry. A few sentences can accompany questions to describe/clarify the issue you are trying to raise briefly. You may also provide examples to clarify any abstract or nuanced ideas related to your question. Questions can serve a variety of purposes such as seeking to clarify an issue you find confusing, critically challenging some aspect of a reading, or provoking discussion of a particular issue you find compelling. Overall, try to ask questions that will stimulate a scientific discussion and avoid asking questions that you could easily answer yourself with some additional research.

In addition to posting discussion questions, I expect you to be an active participant in class discussions. Sufficient engagement in online posts and in-class discussions will earn checks and insufficient effort will earn check minuses, which I will convey to you intermittently. If your effort in participating is consistently insufficient, this will result in a lowered grade. I have provided a tool titled Tips for Reading Success document in Carmen to help support your efforts toward being prepared to engage in class, but please let me know if you need additional support or guidance.

Short Paper: The aim of this paper is to express a communication-based research question you would like to examine in greater depth for the final paper. You need to provide a clear articulation of the research question, an argument as to why you think this research question is important (both in terms of social significance and theory building, but mostly theory building), and some sense of where you might start looking in terms of past research (i.e., identify specific articles in peer-reviewed journals) in order to address this research question.

Exam: The exam will consist of a series of short-essay questions that touch upon foundational aspects of theory covered in class. Students will select a subset of questions I provide to answer during the class session.

Final paper presentation: Students will provide a detailed overview of their final research paper. The structure of the presentation will mimic what typically occurs at communication conferences.

Final paper: Students will write a complete front-end of an article on a topic that interests them. It should include an introduction and rationale, a literature review, and at least one hypothesis. The paper is limited to no more than four constructs/variables. The goal of the article should be to challenge, extend, or modify an existing communication theory.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

- Papers must use APA 7th citation style.
- All works referred to (directly or otherwise) require citation.
- Parsimony is a goal. “Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all of her or his sentences short, or that s/he avoid all detail and treat subjects only in outline, but that every word tell.” –Strunk & White, 1957
- Avoid quotes, especially lengthy ones.
- Spelling, grammar, and sentence structure are important and figure into grading.

GRADING

<u>Item</u>	<u>Point value</u>
Discussion questions, participation	25pts
Exam	20pts
Short paper	15pts
Final paper presentation	10pts
Final paper	30pts
Total for 100% Score in Course	100

Below are the point ranges for each corresponding course letter grade determined by OSU standards. I will not round grades – do not ask.

A 93.00-100%	B 83.00-86.99%	C 73.00-76.99%	D 60.00-66.99%
A- 90.00-92.99%	B- 80.00-82.99%	C- 70.00-72.99%	E 0-59.99%
B+ 87.00-89.99%	C+ 77.00-79.99%	D+ 67.00-69.99%	

COURSE POLICIES

- **Email and Carmen policy:** You are responsible for checking your OSU email account and the Carmen course page regularly. I will post grades and course materials on Carmen throughout the semester. Students are welcome to email me (lynch.659@osu.edu) to set up an appointment to discuss issues related to the course. In any email communication, please put “COMM6806” in the subject line.
- **Attendance:** I expect you to attend every class. If you must miss class due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, you must notify me as soon as feasible. Unexcused absences will carry a penalty to your participation grade. If you miss class for any reason, it is your

responsibility to obtain notes from someone else in the class. My notes will not be available; however, I will gladly answer specific questions about missed content during office hours.

- ***Late submissions and missed exam:*** I will not accept late submissions without advance notification. Under extenuating circumstances, I may offer extensions on submissions without penalty if the student makes the request in advance. The exam date is firm, so students should plan to be in class on time that day. In the event that students miss the exam, they should see me in person to discuss an alternative accommodation. In some circumstances, I may allow students to earn the points for the missed exam.
- ***Use of technology in the classroom:*** Students may not take photographs, record video, or record audio during class. Students should only use laptops and tablets for note taking and class related activities. Failure to comply with these policies will result in point deductions on participation.
- ***Tentative nature of syllabus:*** This syllabus represents an agreement between the students and the instructor, Dr. Teresa Lynch. Students enrolled in this class agree to the terms of the syllabus and understand that the policies, schedule, and deadlines outlined within it are subject to the instructor's modification (with notice via Carmen to students).

OSU POLICIES OBSERVED IN THIS COURSE

- ***Academic misconduct.*** All work should be your original work. You must use citations when presenting ideas that are not your own using APA style. You must complete all submitted work by yourself. You may not reuse work from a past or current semester. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. **Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487).** For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>
- ***Disability services.*** Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, slds@osu.edu; slds.osu.edu. *Students with a documented disability can meet with me*

privately during the first three weeks of class to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

- ***Sexual misconduct/relationship violence.*** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g., race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu.
- ***Diversity.*** The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.
- ***Copyright disclaimer.*** The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.
- ***Student life issues:*** As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24 hour emergency help is also

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available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The schedule below is tentative and subject to change. A log of documented changes is available in Carmen for any adjustments to the schedule.

Day	Date	Topic	Readings	Due
W	24-Aug	Course introduction	Syllabus, Pencil	(Note: No discussion posts due)
M	29-Aug	Ways of knowing and social science	Schlick, Popper	
W	31-Aug	About theory and the field of communication	Berger et al. (2010); Chaffee & Berger (1987; p. 99-105 required; all recommended)	
M	5-Sep	Labor Day – No Class		
W	7-Sep	Foundations of theory II	Miller & Nicholson Ch. 1; Kerlinger (recommended Miller & Nicholson Ch 2; Chaffee (1991))	
M	12-Sep	Foundations of theory II	Slater & Gleason (2012); Walther (2014)	
W	14-Sep	Foundations of theory III	DeAndrea and Holbert (2017); Holbert and Park (2019)	
M	19-Sep	What graduate students should know	Hample, Roloff, Pfau (pp. 111-126); Roloff (2015)	
W	21-Sep	Exam		Exam (in class)
M	26-Sep	Interpersonal communication	Stafford (2015); Levine (2014); Goodboy et al. (2020)	
W	28-Sep	Interpersonal communication	Soloman et al. (2021); Rhodes et al. (2020)	
M	3-Oct	CMC	Walther et al. (2015); Lee (2020)	
W	5-Oct	CMC	DeAndrea (2014); Meier & Reinecke (2020)	
M	10-Oct	Political communication	Eveland & Garrett (2017); Garrett, Weeks, & Neo (2016)	
W	12-Oct	Political communication	Eveland et al. (2020); Coronel et al. (2021)	
M	17-Oct	Science communication	Shulman & Bullock (2020); Bonus & Mares (2018)	
W	19-Oct	Health communication	Lang (2006); Hovick et al. (2019)	
M	24-Oct	Health communication	Clayton (2022); So, Kuang, & Cho (2016)	

W	26-Oct	Mass communication	Brown (2015); Moyer-Guse (2015)	
M	31-Oct	Mass communication	Slater (2015); Grizzard et al. 2020	
W	2-Nov	Human computer interaction	Kramer et al. (2015)	Short Papers Due Friday November 4
M	7-Nov	Human computer interaction	Lynch et al. (2022); Hartmann & Fox (2021)	
W	9-Nov	Identity and Context	Ramasubramanian & Banjo (2020); Appiah (2018)	
M	14-Nov	Use and Selection	Valkenberg et al. (2021); Bayer and LaRose (2018)	
W	16-Nov	Effects	Lee-won et al. (2019); Bushman & Anderson (2021)	
M	21-Nov	The future of communication theory	Song, Eberl, & Eisele (2020)	
W	23-Nov	Thanksgiving Break – No Class		
M	28-Nov	Presentations		
W	30-Nov	Presentations		
M	5-Dec	Presentations		
W	7-Dec	Final consultations for final papers		Final Papers Due Friday Dec 9

Reading References

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2020.1736701>
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